



Human Services Department Immigrant & Refugee Youth Program

Wednesday, July 27, 2011 | Seattle Human Services Department | Dannette R. Smith, Director

**Mayor Michael McGinn
Deputy Mayor Darryl Smith**

Immigrant & Refugee Youth Program: Overview

In the 2011-2012 Budget process, Mayor McGinn added \$150,000 to the Human Services Department (HSD) budget for a new program serving immigrant and refugee youth. The City Council asked HSD to provide details on program, and the department developed a program to include:

- Family-based approach to job readiness training for immigrant and refugee youth coordinated with support for parents
- Co-location of youth and parent services
- Family self-sufficiency classes for both youth and parents
- Bilingual job readiness training for youth with paid summer employment
- Bilingual family education for parents to expand understanding of American schools including postsecondary education and career pathways

Immigrant & Refugee Youth Program: Rationale for Services

- Immigrant and refugee youth, ages 15 to 20, have the lowest high school graduation rates.
- Immigrant and refugee parents face multiple challenges making a successful transition to life in America such as obtaining a living wage job and overcoming language barriers.
- Most parent education is focused on immigrant and refugee parents with younger children.
- The need for family education/bilingual job readiness training for immigrant and refugee youth was a common theme in Youth & Families Initiative community meetings.

Immigrant & Refugee Youth Program: Primary Target Population

- Immigrant and refugee youth with limited English skills from low-income families
- Youth who speak one of the six most common languages spoken by SPS high school students with limited English skills, representing the largest populations of immigrants and refugees:
 - Somali
 - Vietnamese
 - Chinese
 - Filipino
 - Spanish
 - Amharic
- Youth ages 15 to 20
- Parents and/or older relatives of youth

Immigrant & Refugee Youth Program: Community Feedback

Human Services Department Family Interviews

- Dire need to understand postsecondary education options, application requirement process and available resources
- Need classes to help youth learn job readiness skills
- Desire and need for youth to have part-time jobs

Immigrant and Refugee Advisory Board

- There is the need and support for the concept of job readiness training, paid youth employment, and integrated bilingual/bicultural family support
- High need for capacity-building of small immigrant/refugee community-based organizations
- Job readiness training services is a need among all immigrant/refugee communities
- There is continued interest in the Request for Investment (RFI) process including participation on the RFI review panel if the funding is approved

Immigrant & Refugee Youth Program: Community Feedback (continued)

Immigrant /Refugee Community Providers Focus Group

- Need and support for the concept of job readiness training and paid youth employment, especially older youth with limited English skills.
- Limited ability of parents to overcome barriers to participation such as work schedules, need for immediate employment, low English skills, and lack of housing.
- High youth interest in job readiness programs and internships.

Program Timeline

2011	October	Issue Request for Investment (RFI) Technical Assistance for RFI
	January	Agencies notified of funding decisions
2012	February - March	Capacity building of community-based agencies
	March - May	Youth and family outreach
	May - June	Youth job readiness training Parent education sessions
	May - December	Family support services (i.e., case management, school advocacy)
	June - August	Youth summer employment
	June - October	Family Self-Sufficiency
	November - December	Family education sessions

Immigrant & Refugee Youth Program: RFI Process and Timeline

- The Request for Investment (RFI) process will identify community-based agencies to provide services.
- The process will be responsive to cultural, racial, and ethnic differences.
- A series of four RFI workshops will review the process and cover four areas:
 1. Staff Qualifications & Hiring
 2. Development of Family Education
 3. Job Readiness Training and Work Experience
 4. Budget

Timeline

October 2011

Release RFI to community

January 2012

Agencies notified of funding decisions

February-April 2012

Capacity building with agencies

May 2012

Program services begin

Immigrant & Refugee Youth Program: Impact and Outcomes

- Contribute to fewer student absences from school
- Facilitate better communication between parents and schools
- Minimize barriers to family participation in schools and children's education
- Offer high-quality learning activities during after- and non-school hours
- Provide bilingual job readiness training/classes to prepare for employment
- Help older youth and their families reach self-sufficiency
- Prepare youth and parents for postsecondary enrollment